

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of irradiating a layer including:

directing and focussing a radiation beam to a spot on said layer by means of at least one optical element;

causing relative movement of the layer relative to said at least one optical element so that, successively, different portions of the layer are irradiated and an interspace between a surface of said at least one optical element nearest to said layer is maintained; and

maintaining at least a portion of said interspace through which said radiation beam irradiates said spot on said layer filled with a liquid, the liquid being supplied via a supply conduit and flowing out of an outflow opening;

~~characterized in that wherein~~ at least one outflow opening via which the liquid flows out is provided in the form of at least one canal open towards said layer, said canal distributing supplied liquid longitudinally along said canal and dispensing distributed liquid towards said layer, and

wherein at least a portion of said liquid fills up a recess through which said radiation beam irradiates said spot, said recess including a concave portion of said surface of said at least one optical element nearest to said layer.

2. (Currently Amended) A-The method according to claim 1, wherein the canal or canals are positioned such that, seen in a direction perpendicular to said layer, the canals define a total cross-sectional area having a centre in said portion of said interspace through which the radiation irradiates the spot.

3. (Currently Amended) A-The method according to claim 1, wherein a smallest thickness of said interspace is maintained at 3-1500 μm .

Claim 4 (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) A ~~The~~ method according to ~~claim 4~~ claim 1, wherein the recess has a rim portion closest to said layer extending around said radiation irradiating said spot.

Claim 6 (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) A device for directing radiation to a layer including:

at least one optical element for focussing a beam of radiation originating from ~~said a~~ radiation source to a spot on said layer;

a displacement structure for causing relative movement of the layer relative to said at least one optical element so that, successively, different portions of the layer are irradiated and an interspace between said layer and a surface of said at least one optical element nearest to said spot is maintained; and

an outflow opening for supplying liquid to at least a portion of said interspace through which, in operation, said radiation irradiates said spot on said layer, said outflow opening having a

total projected cross-sectional passage area in a plane

perpendicular to an axis of said ~~radiation beam~~;

~~characterized in that the at least one wherein the~~ outflow opening is formed by at least one canal open towards said layer, for distributing supplied liquid longitudinally along said canal and dispensing distributed liquid towards said layer, and

wherein a recess is provided in a surface facing said spot, an internal surface of said recess bounding at least said portion of said interspace through which said radiation irradiates said spot, said recess including a concave portion of said surface of said at least one optical element nearest to said spot.

8. (Currently Amended) A The device according to claim 7, wherein the outflow opening or a plurality of the outflow openings are positioned such that, seen in a direction parallel to said axis of said ~~radiation beam~~, said total projected cross-sectional passage area has a centre in said portion of said ~~gap~~ interspace through which the radiation irradiates the spot.

9. (Currently Amended) A The device according to claim 7,

wherein said displacement structure and said recess are positioned and dimensioned for maintaining a smallest thickness of said interspace at 3-1500 μm .

Claim 10 (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The device according to ~~claim 10~~ claim 7, wherein said recess has a rim portion closest to said layer extending around said portion of said interspace through which, in operation, said radiation irradiates said spot.

Claim 12 (Canceled)